



August 5, 2014

The Honourable Christy Clark
Premier Province of British Columbia
PO Box 9041, Stn Govt
Victoria, B.C. V8W 9E1

The Honourable Peter Fassbender
Minister of Education
PO Box 9045, Stn Govt
Victoria, B.C. V8W 9E2

Re: Use of teacher strike savings

Dear Premier Clark and Minister Fassbender,

I am writing on behalf of the Board of Education for School District No. 42 (Maple Ridge - Pitt Meadows) in response to the latest announcement by government to use the funds saved from the salaries of striking teachers to pay parents of students under 13 years of age \$40 per day should the strike continue in September. While we appreciate the financial hardship a continuation of the strike/lock out will impose on British Columbian families we cannot endorse the government's plan.

The BC School Trustees' Association has tabled an action plan to end the current impasse suggesting the use of these funds to enhance the learning improvement fund. The BC School Trustees' Association proposal was tabled as a suggestion to end the impasse by September. We sincerely hope that is achieved. However, if a settlement is not reached by then we still believe the funds should be retained for use to achieve a final settlement in the fashion described by the BC School Trustees' Association. We understand the government plan provides a short term benefit in the form of financial relief for families. In our view taking that step removes an important tool from the bargaining team to end this impasse and achieve a longer term benefit for students in the form of increased learning improvement funding. For the sake of our students and a stronger public education system please reconsider the strategy which has been announced and adopt that suggested by the BC School Trustees' Association.

Please know we are also very concerned that the government plan was developed without any consultation with the BC School Trustees' Association or Boards of Education despite our co-governance role. This kind of unilateral decision making is not helpful at a time when we have been working to improve the co-governance relationship. We all know working more closely together will be extremely important if we are to achieve the goals we share for education in this Province.

Sincerely,



Mike Murray, Chair
Board of Education

Cc:

Mr. Doug Bing, MLA

Mr. Marc Dalton, MLA

BC School Trustees' Association

School District No. 42 Board of Education

Laurie Meston, Acting Superintendent

Flavia Coughlan, Secretary Treasurer

Maple Ridge Teachers' Association

Canadian Union of Public Employees' Local 703

Maple Ridge Principals' and Vice Principals' Association

District Parent Advisory Council

District Student Advisory Council